

REMARKS

This timely filed Reply is responsive to the Final Office Action dated December 9, 2004. This Reply is accompanied by a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) along with an authorization to charge the required statutory fee for the RCE.

Claims 7-11 were pending at the time of the Final Office Action. Claims 7-9 and 11 rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on Rouillard et al. (U.S. 6,120,930), while claim 10 was determined to be allowable if written in independent form.

In this Reply, claims 7, 8 and 10 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Support for the amendments made can be found throughout the specification, such as with reference to figs. 3-6 and the accompanying specification.

Before reviewing Rouillard, Applicants will first review the claimed invention now recited in amended claim 7. Amended claim 7 recites a method of manufacturing a lithium ion battery, comprising the steps of providing a plurality of *stacked* lithium cells with a polymer separator there between, positioning the *stacked* cells longitudinally within a housing having a front and a backside thereto so as to be parallel to the ends of the housing. All anode current collectors of the plurality of stacked cells are *welded* to an inside surface of the anode terminal and all cathode current collectors of the plurality of stacked cells are *welded* to the inside surface of the cathode terminal. The anode cell terminal is assembled at one end of the housing and the cathode cell terminal at the opposite end of the housing, wherein the plurality of stacked cells are enclosed within the housing.

Rouillard discloses an electrochemical generator which includes a thin-film electrochemical cell which is maintained in a state of compression through use of an internal or an external pressure apparatus. A thermal conductor, which is connected to at least one of the

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positive or negative contacts of the cell, conducts current into and out of the cell and also conducts thermal energy between the cell and thermally conductive, electrically resistive material disposed on a vessel wall adjacent the conductor. The thermally conductive, electrically resistive material may include an anodized coating or a thin sheet of a plastic, mineral-based material or conductive polymer material. The thermal conductor is fabricated to include a resilient portion which expands and contracts to maintain mechanical contact between the cell and the thermally conductive material in the presence of relative movement between the cell and the wall structure. The electrochemical generator may be disposed in a hermetically sealed housing.

Rouillard discloses only wound cell designs, such as the "jelly roll" configuration. The wound designs, such as the jelly roll, are clearly not stacked designs. In the jelly roll design, the edges of the jelly roll are placed in contact with the appropriate terminal end using a metal spraying technique. See col. 3, line 37 to 47 copied below:

In FIGS. 2A-2C, there is illustrated various embodiments of a thin-film electrochemical cell which may be used in the fabrication of a rechargeable energy storing device. As is shown in FIG. 2A, a thin-film electrochemical cell may be packaged in a "jelly roll" configuration so as to form a generally cylindrical cell structure in which a first edge 42 of the cell forms a positive contact 43, and a second edge 44 forms a negative contact 45. The positive and negative contacts 43, 45 are formed typically by use of a known metal spraying technique.

According to col. 3 line 66 to col. 4 line 3, the metal sprayed contacts provide "superior current collection along the length of the anode and cathode film edges 25". Thus, the current collector to terminal contact is a contact interface, not a welded interface. Moreover, the contact interface formed is disclosed by Rouillard to provide "superior current collection".

In contrast to Rouillard who discloses only wound cell designs and metal sprayed current collector to terminal contacts, amended claim 1 recites a method of manufacturing a lithium ion battery, comprising the steps of providing a plurality of *stacked* lithium cells with a polymer

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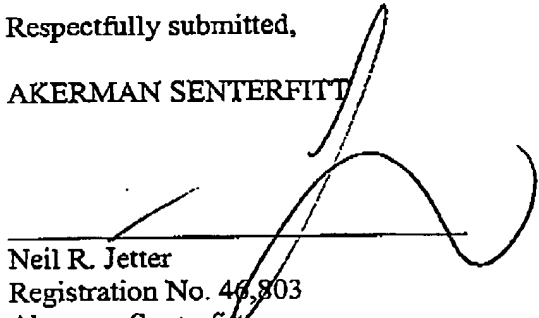
separator there between, positioning the stacked cells longitudinally within a housing having a front and a backside thereto so as to be parallel to the ends of the housing. All anode current collectors of the plurality of stacked cells are *welded* to an inside surface of the anode terminal and all cathode current collectors of the plurality of stacked cells are *welded* to the inside surface of the cathode terminal. Based on the differences described above between the claimed invention and the cited art, Applicants submit that amended claim 7 and claims dependent thereon are all patentable claims.

Applicants have made every effort to present claims which distinguish over the cited art, and it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance. However, Applicants invite the Examiner to call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview (direct line (561) 671-3662) would expedite the prosecution of the application to an allowance. The Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees due or credit an excess in fees with the filing of the papers submitted herein during prosecution of this application to Deposit Account No. 50-0951.

Respectfully submitted,

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